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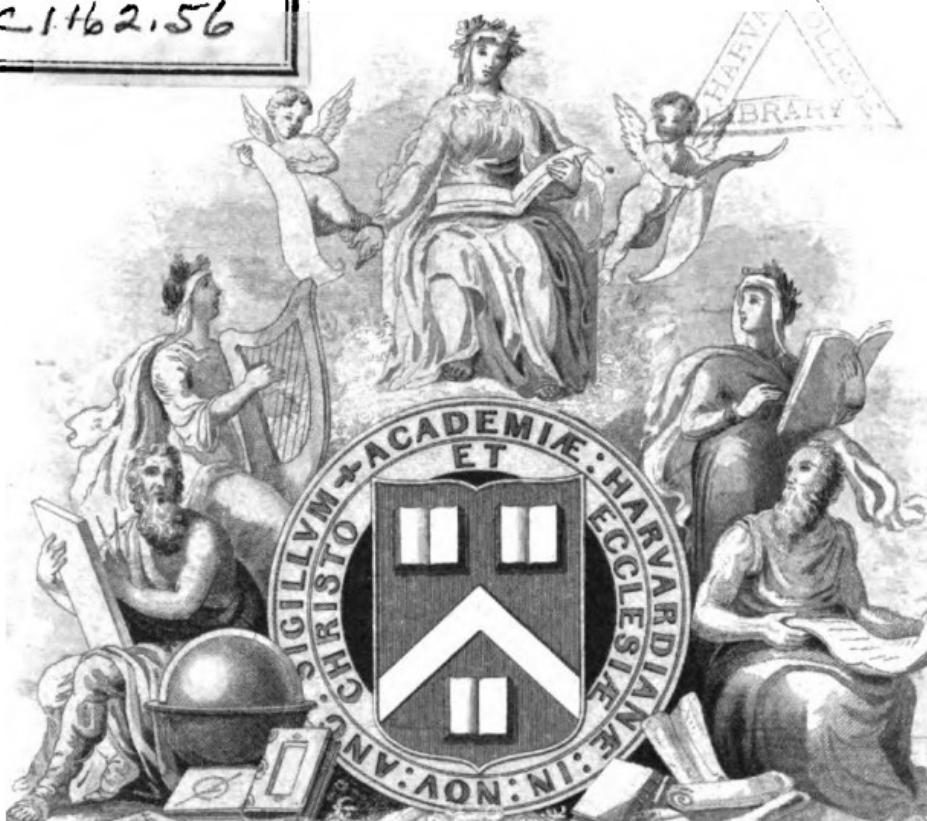
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MEDITATIONS
FOR
THE SICK.

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The gift of
Mrs. Harriet Stone,
of Cambridge,
the Widow of
Dr. William H. Stone.

Received
28 May, 1860.

MEDITATIONS

FOR

THE SICK.

BY

JONATHAN COLE.

BOSTON:

JAMES MUNROE AND COMPANY.

1837.

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TO
THE REV. JOHN BRAZER, D. D.,
THE
KIND FRIEND AND FAITHFUL PASTOR
OF
THE SICK,
THIS LITTLE WORK IS RESPECTFULLY
Enscribed.

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P R E F A C E.

In the course of my ministry, I have very often felt the want of some work of a practical and devotional character, adapted particularly to the circumstances of the sick, and I have heard the same want expressed by many of my professional brethren.

In the attempt which has now been made to supply this want, it has been kept constantly in mind, that elaborate discussion and refined speculation are wholly out of place in a work designed for those whose bodily infirmities render any long continued mental exertion fa-

tiguing and injurious. I have, therefore, thrown together plain precepts in short chapters ; and have preferred to leave the several topics of the chapters unexhausted, rather than to exhaust the strength of those for whose benefit they are intended.

Believing that good devotional poetry has a peculiarly happy effect in soothing and sustaining the tried spirit, I have given it a large place in this little volume. Some of the hymns will be recognised as familiar friends. The greater part of them, however, are not to be found in the collections of sacred poetry commonly used in this country. Those published at the end of the volume are taken chiefly from the "Union Collection" by Curtis, and the collection by Wilcox, published, a few years since, in London.

In the hope that these Meditations may be instrumental in cheering the dark hours of sickness, and in leading the sufferer to the source and design and right use of his trial, they are submitted to those for whom they were especially designed.

Hallowell, Me., March, 1887.

MEDITATIONS FOR THE SICK.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

The providence of God has brought you, my suffering friend, to a season of severe trial. Your days are days of pain, and your nights are nights of weariness. Sickness is wasting your strength; in the morning are you ready to say, "Would God it were night;" and at night, "Would God it were morning." You feel, perhaps, that the springs of life are failing, that you are fast hastening to the tomb.

And in what frame of mind do you find yourself? Does this sickness come as an angel of mercy, a monitor of good to your soul? Or do you find that it has excited within you feelings of impatience,

a spirit of distrust of His goodness who has sent it upon you? Has it, in any degree, called you to sober thought upon your spiritual concerns? Has it done any thing toward weaning you from the world? Or has it been the chief subject of your reflection, that you are cut off by this illness from the ordinary pursuits of your life? Have you regarded it as only a vexatious interruption of your worldly plans? Has it overwhelmed you with distress, lest it should be unto death? Or do you receive it as a welcome messenger to remind you of another and better life; perhaps the appointed means of freeing you from the tabernacle of flesh, and of bringing you nearer to Christ and to God in the spiritual world?

In sending upon you this sickness, your Heavenly Father is teaching you important lessons. If you will use aright this dispensation of his providence, he is affording you a valuable opportunity for spiritual improvement. In sending this chastisement, he has a meaning which it will be wise for you to search out.

To assist you in this search, to show you the true uses of the trial to which you are now called, and to point out some of the duties which belong peculiarly to your present circumstances, is the object of these pages. If they shall serve profitably to beguile a weary hour, if they shall afford you any new views of duty, or give you any fresh arguments for submission to God's will, they will not have been written in vain.

PRAYER.

MERCIFUL God, who, in all thine appointments to thy children, art wise and just and kind, aid me, I humbly pray thee, in understanding the design of thy providence in sending this sickness upon me. Help me to make a right use of the discipline of thy hand. I would remember that it is the chastening of a Father that loveth his children, which is now laid upon me. Blessed be thy name for this assurance! and grant, oh most Holy Father, that I may so submit to thy rebuke, that my heart may be made better; that my spirit may be purified by this affliction, and prepared for the enjoyment of thee in that world where pain and sickness cannot come. This I ask in the name of thy dear Son, my Savior.

GOD WISE AND MERCIFUL IN CHASTISEMENT.

How gracious and how wise
Is our chastising God !
And ah ! how rich the blessings are
That blossom from his rod !

He lifts it up on high
With pity in his heart,
That every stroke his children feel
May grace and peace impart.

Instructed thus they bow,
And own his sovereign sway ,
They turn their erring footsteps back
To his forsaken way.

His covenant love they seek,
And seek the happy lands,
That closer still engage their hearts
To honor his commands.

Our Father, we consent
To discipline divine,
And bless the pains that make our souls
Still more completely thine.

DODDRIDGE.

CHAPTER II.

SICKNESS TEACHES US THE FRAILTY OF LIFE.

THE first reflection, that naturally arises in the mind of the sick, is the thought of the frailty of human life.

In the hour of your weakness and pain, you are receiving a lesson upon this subject which you could not so forcibly feel under any other circumstances. The fact is urged home upon your notice, and you cannot turn away from it, if you would. In the time of health, in the day of your strength, you have perhaps forgotten that you must lie down in the grave. You have seen friends and companions, one after another, falling around you, and passing away from earth; but, in the buoyancy of your heart, you have thought that your mountain stood strong and would not soon be moved. But now the keepers of the house tremble, and they that look out of the windows are darkened,

and you know that you are allied to the dust, and to the dust must you soon return.

It may be that the very sickness, under which you are now suffering, is to be your last sickness. A few more of these days of pain and distress passed through, and the hour of your departure shall come, and you shall go forth to join the mighty congregation of the dead, who have already entered the portals of the tomb. And should God bless the means using for your recovery, and spare your life now, yet will you be reminded by this sickness, that the elements of dissolution are at work within you, and that you hold your life by an uncertain tenure. It will be but the deferring, for a short period, an event that you must meet at last.

Permit me to ask, my friend, if you have made the thought of death a subject of serious consideration. If you have not, I beg that you would do so now. Receive the admonition which God is giving you, and learn how frail you are,

how soon you may be called to close your eyes upon this scene of your earthly probation.

PRAYER.

TEACH me the measure of my days, oh God, that I may know how frail I am. Let me be admonished by these days of pain and weariness, that I have here no continuing city nor abiding-place. May I remember that my home is not upon earth. I would feel that this body is allied unto the dust, and must return to the dust whence it was taken. Surely am I a stranger and pilgrim on the earth, as all my fathers were.

Give me, oh Father, that deep sense of the uncertainty and frailty of life, which may lead me rightly to improve the remnant of my days, and to consecrate to thy service the brief term of my probationary existence; and aid me with the gracious influence of thy Holy Spirit, that I may become the faithful follower of him who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light.

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE?

Oh! what is life? — 'T is like a flower
 That blossoms — and is gone ;
 It flourishes its little hour,
 With all its beauty on :
 Death comes — and, like a wintry day,
 It cuts the lovely flower away.

Oh! what is life? — 'T is like the bow
 That glistens in the sky ;
 We love to see its colors glow —
 But while we look, they die :
 Life fails as soon; to-day 't is here —
 To-morrow it may disappear.

Lord, what is life? — If spent with thee
 In humble praise and prayer,
 How long or short our life may be
 We feel no anxious care :
 Though life depart, our joys shall last,
 When life and all its joys are past.

JANE TAYLOR.

CHAPTER III.

VIEWS OF DEATH.

AND how are you affected by the thought of death? Are you ready to meet it without dismay? Have you long since made these serious reflections upon your mortality familiar to you? Can you look forward to the hour that shall set you free from the tabernacle of flesh, as a period to be welcomed rather than dreaded? Have you led the Christian's life, and can you die the Christian's death, rejoicing in the hope of a better world? If so, your condition is indeed enviable. Go forward without fear —

“Thy God, and with the tenderest hand,
Shall lead thee safely through;
Hail! shalt thou cry, hail! promised land,
And wilderness adieu!”

Borne up by this hope, well may you endure patiently the pains and disquiets of your sickness; “for you know that if your earthly house of this tabernacle

were dissolved, you have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

But does the thought of death fill your heart with dismay? Do you feel that you are wholly unprepared for this great change? Does the remembrance of neglected duty and committed sin oppress your spirit with a painful sense of guilt, a fearful looking for of judgment? Do you find yourself disposed to turn away from these pages, and to put far from you these sober thoughts?—I entreat you, my dear friend, not to resist these strivings of the spirit; turn not away from the friendly voice of conscience, that is now, it may be, for the last time, in this your day of probation, calling upon you, warning you of the danger of impenitence, and urging you to forsake every sin.

Would to God, that this sickness might prove the occasion of awakening you to a true sense of your condition, character, and hopes, as a spiritual and immortal being! Would, that you might now, if

you have not done it before, turn your heart to that Savior, whose purpose it was to produce an atonement between the sinner and his God, who came to seek and to save that which was lost.

You may feel that you are a sinner. But God loves you still, and is still extending to you his arm of mercy. And will you refuse the proffered blessing? Will you not rather say, "Lord, to whom shall I go but unto thee? Thou art my strength and my hope. Thou art the God of my salvation, in thee will I put my trust."

PRAYER.

God of all grace, let me no longer be insensible to thy goodness. Thou hast searched me and known me. Thou hast seen my follies and my sins. Thou hast known my forgetfulness of thee, my neglect of duty, my disobedience to thy commands. And yet, oh Father, thou hast borne with me and blessed me; thou hast continued me in existence; thou hast never forgotten nor forsaken me. Look down upon thy servant with compassion. Be not strict to mark mine iniquity, but lift upon me the light of thy reconciled countenance, and accept the penitence of my heart. God of mercy, forgive thy wayward, disobedient child. I am admonished by my present infirmity, that the time is fast drawing near when I must leave this scene of probation, and stand in judgment before thee. Prepare me, oh Lord, for this solemn event. I ask it

**in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ,—
through whom to thee be rendered all
praise forever.**

CONTEMPLATION OF JUDGMENT.

Oh God, mine inmost soul convert,
And deeply on my thoughtful heart
Eternal things impress ;
Give me to feel their solemn weight,
And tremble on the brink of fate,
And wake to righteousness.

Before me place, in dread array,
The pomp of that tremendous day
When thou with clouds shalt come,
To judge the nations at thy bar ;
And tell me, Lord, shall I be there
To meet a joyful doom ?

Be this my one great business here,
With serious industry and fear,
Eternal bliss to insure ;
Thine utmost counsel to fulfil,
And suffer all thy righteous will,
And to the end endure.

Then, Father, then my soul receive,
Transported from this vale, to live

And reign with thee above ;
Where faith is sweetly lost in sight,
And hope, in full, supreme delight,
And everlasting love.

C. WESLEY.

CHAPTER IV.

INSUFFICIENCY OF THE WORLD.

AND how inadequate is the world to yield you support under your present trial !

From the retirement of your sick chamber, and with a mind sobered by the reflections in which you have now been engaged, look out upon the world, and take note of the pageant as it passes in review before you.

Here is that light-hearted train, whose occupation is the pursuit of their pleasures. Do they wait for you to join them, and do you find it in your heart to go with them on their giddy round? Does the sound of their mirthful revelry fall harmonious upon your ear? Is it in unison with your spirit? Do you find in it a charm to dull the sharp sting of pain? or can you regard their pursuits as the proper objects to which life should be devoted? No; you are ready to say of their laughter, it is mad; and of their mirth, what doeth

it? You would shut out that sound of thoughtless merriment; it falls discordant upon your ear.

Here are the votaries of sensual indulgence. They have spread the dainty feast, they have filled the sparkling wine-cup, they have brought together, in rich profusion and with exquisite skill, all that can gratify the appetite. Will you not forget for a season the wearisomeness of disease, and partake with them in the banquet so invitingly arranged? What mockery! That fevered palate finds no pleasure even in the choicest dainties, and a cup of cold water is more grateful to your parched lips than floods of the richest wines.

Or, enter with that busy man into the calculations which he is making for the promotion of some scheme of worldly advantage. Count up with him his anticipated gains, and beguile the tedious hours of your confinement with devising new schemes for increasing your worldly store. How will the thought break in upon you,

that all the treasures of earth will not purchase for you a moment's repose, nor a single day's respite from the grave!

Does the voice of fame bear your name upon every wind of heaven? How empty is the world's applause to one who feels that he is drawing near the solemn tribunal of the great Searcher of hearts! The still, small voice of an approving conscience were worth more to you than the loud acclamations of admiring multitudes.

The world, then, cannot yield you any support that will sustain you in the trying hour of adversity. Lean not upon it. It will prove but a broken reed.

PRAYER

Oh Thou, who art the fountain of all love, the rich source of all true consolation, teach me, I humbly pray thee, the right use of the world's pleasures and the world's cares. Suffer me not to seek in them a support which they cannot give. And since, by the dispensation of thy providence, I am now brought to see the insufficiency of the things of time and sense to sustain the spirit under the trials of life, enable me, by the assistance of thy grace, to apply my heart unto the true wisdom; and let me find some better source of comfort, under the trials that await me here, than any which the world can give. And thine shall be the kingdom, power, and glory forever.

COMFORT IN SICKNESS.

WHEN sickness shakes the languid frame,
 Each dazzling pleasure flies ;
 Phantoms of bliss no more obscure
 Our long deluded eyes.

Their frail support deceives no more,
 When death his sceptre shows,
 And nature faints beneath the weight
 Of complicated woes.

The tottering frame of mortal life-
 Shall crumble into dust ;
 Nature shall faint ; but learn, my soul,
 In nature's God to trust.

He, whose believing heart is fixed
 Securely on his God,
 From every frown may draw a joy,
 And kiss the chastening rod.

Nor him shall death itself alarm ;
 On heaven his soul relies ;
 With joy he views his Savior's love,
 And with composure dies.

HEGINBOTHAM.

CHAPTER V.

CHRISTIANITY THE TRUE SUPPORT.

THE world, then, is inadequate to your support under your present trial. You find that its pleasures have no charm for you, that its cares will not bring you relief.

But are you, then, left without support? Are you abandoned to your fate, and left to struggle on, unaided and alone, through the trials of this world's pilgrimage? No; sufferer, you are not so left. You may hear the voice of him, who trod the path of suffering before you, calling to you in the language of affectionate entreaty: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Turn away, then, from earth; and in the exercise of an humble and hearty faith in Jesus, you may find a confidence and holy trust, which will prove adequate to all your necessities.

Examine the truths which are unfolded to you in the gospel. Mark their adaptedness to your wants. Compare their influence with that of the world, which you have just been considering, and say if they do not yield you efficient support under your present trial. They tell of the purest pleasures which may be yours, even upon the bed of pain and languishment. They invite you to contemplate the character and government of God; to reflect upon the true use of the pains and sorrows of life. They show you the connexion between the present and the future life. They bring to your view the perfect example of that Son of God, who bore our sicknesses and was acquainted with our griefs. They speak to you of a Providence that watcheth over all with the eye of love. They teach you of the discipline of a Father, who would wean your affections from the world, and draw you unto himself. They unfold to you the joys of heaven, and bid you bear patiently the cross, that you may win and wear the crown.

And is there nothing in thoughts like these to cheer and sustain your soul? Let them be brought faithfully and seriously to view. Do not cast away the consolations of that religion, which your Heavenly Parent, in his great mercy, has provided for your comfort and support, as well as for your guidance and direction. Oh, despise not the exceeding riches of God's grace.

PRAYER.

FATHER of mercies ! blessed be thy name, that thou hast given me thy word of truth, as an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast.

I thank thee for all the promises which it gives, for all the knowledge which it imparts, for all the hopes which it inspires. In this season of trial, I would flee to it, as to a friend that will not fail. Let the religion which it teaches be my guide through all the dark and trying scenes of my life. Enable me to feel deeply its value and its power. Help me to understand aright its requirements. Aid me in rendering obedience to its precepts. Grant, oh God, that I may not be turned away from its holy influences by an evil spirit of unbelief, by hardness and impenitence of heart.

THE BLESSINGS OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH.

JOIN, all ye servants of the Lord,
To praise him for his sacred word —
That word, like manna sent from heaven,
To all who seek it freely given :
Its promises our fears remove,
And fill our hearts with joy and love.

It tells us, though oppressed with cares,
The God of mercy hears our prayers ;
Though steep and rough the appointed way,
His mighty arm shall be our stay ;
Though deadly foes assail our peace,
His power shall bid their malice cease.

It tells who first inspired our breath,
And who redeemed our souls from death ;
It tells of grace, grace freely given,
And shows the path to God and heaven :
O bless we, then, our gracious Lord,
For all the treasures of his word !

SPIRIT OF THE PSALMS.

CHAPTER VI.

DUTIES OF THE SICK.—PRAYER.

I HAVE spoken of religion as a support to you under your present trial. So, indeed, it is; but you must guard against considering it in this light only.

Religion can and will do much for you; but you must not forget that you also are to do something for religion. To feel the full power of the supports of religion, you must at the same time feel the importance of performing the duties of religion.

It is very true that God does not require the performance of the same duties under all circumstances however various; but he does require that we should perform the duties which belong peculiarly to the condition in which it has pleased his providence to place us. Do not, then, suppose that you have no duties to perform, because you cannot, in a state

of sickness, discharge the duties that belong more properly to the season of health and strength. And what are the duties of your present condition ?

In the first place, remember the duties which you owe to God. And what duty more prominent than that of frequent and devout communion with the Father of Spirits ? "He that means to have his sickness turn into safety and life, into health and virtue," says Jeremy Taylor, "must make religion the employment of his sickness, and prayer the employment of his religion." "Prayer speaks to God, when the tongue is stiffened with the approaches of death ; prayer can dwell in the heart, and be signified by the hand or eye, by a thought or a groan ; prayer, of all the actions of religion, is the last alive, and it serves God without circumstances, and exercises material graces by abstraction and separation from matter, and makes them to be spiritual, and therefore best dresses our bodies for fu-

neral or recovery, for the mercies of restitution, or the mercies of the grave."

The quiet and retirement of your sick room affords you a peculiarly favorable opportunity for the performance of the duty of prayer. You cannot plead the hurry of life and the pressing nature of its avocations, as excuses for neglecting this duty. Let not so favorable an opportunity for the exercise and cultivation of the devotional sentiment pass unimproved; but draw near to God in holy communion, and let your prayers be the prayers of sincerity and faith, which alone are acceptable in the sight of God.

PRAYER.

HOLY, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty !
To thee belongeth the devout homage of all
hearts. Give unto thy servant the spirit
of prayer and of devout supplication.
Let me feel that thou art near, and that
thou art ever ready to listen to the pray-
ers of thy children. In the day of my
visitation, I would turn to thee for suc-
cor ; be thou the health of my counte-
nance and the God of my salvation.

Father, I thank thee for the privilege
of prayer. Unworthy as I am to lift up
mine eyes to heaven, still thou hast bid
me seek thy face, and in the name of my
blessed Savior thou hast taught me to
pray. Now that thou hast called me
away from the active scenes of life, I
would pass my hours more entirely with
thee. Hear me, oh Lord, in heaven, thy
dwelling-place, and when thou hearest,
answer, accept, and forgive ; and thine shall
be the praise forever.

PRAYER.

SWEET is the prayer whose holy stream
 In earnest pleading flows ;
 Devotion dwells upon the theme,
 And warm and warmer grows.

Faith grasps the blessing she desires,
 Hope points the upward gaze,
 And love, celestial love, inspires
 The eloquence of praise.

But sweeter far the still, small voice,
 Heard by no human ear ;
 When God has made the heart rejoice,
 And dried the bitter tear : —

Deep in the Bethel of the heart,
 Unearthly feelings throb ;
 They cannot into language start,
 Their only vent, a sob.

No accents flow, no words ascend,
 All utterance faileth there ;
 But sainted spirits comprehend,
 And God accepts the prayer.

ANONYMOUS.

CHAPTER VII.

DUTY OF RESIGNATION.

ONE of the most important influences of your devout communion with God will be the spirit of resignation to the divine will, which prayer is so well calculated to produce.

You cannot fervently pray, without feeling a deeper sense of God's presence and guardian care. You cannot bow down your spirit in adoration of the infinite and perfect attributes of Jehovah, without having the sentiment awakened within you,—“Am I not safe under such guardianship? May I not repose in confidence upon the wisdom and love of such a being as this? Truly, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, and the Judge of all the earth will do right!”

And besides this sense of the character and providence of the Almighty, there are other arguments, which urge upon you the duty of resignation to the divine will.

It is taught you by the revelation of God's truth; of that truth which unfolds to you the design of his providence in sending afflictions upon his children. Could you indeed feel that your present affliction, however grievous it may seem to you, was sent with the design of working out for you a far more exceeding, even an eternal weight of glory, would it not enable you to resign yourself, with more cheerful submission, into the hands of God? And what is this but the express declaration of divine truth?

And again, look unto Jesus, and learn of him how to bear the trial which God is bringing upon you. What are the pains and sorrows that encompass you, compared with those which he was called to suffer? And how submissively did he bow to the will of God, and yield himself into the hands of the Father! Strive to imitate his example, and say, in his words and in his spirit, "Not my will, O Father, but thine be done!" When you can say this from the heart, you have indeed ac-

complished a great work ; you have discharged a duty that will bring a blessing upon your soul.

PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful God ! Thou art good, and doest good continually. Holy art thou in all thy ways, perfect in all thine attributes. Thou dost not willingly afflict nor grieve thy children ; and when thou sendest chastisements upon them, it is for their best good.

Enable me, in this season of sickness and pain, to resign myself wholly into thy hands, as to a faithful Creator and unfailing Friend. Suffer not thy servant to forget thy guardian care, thine ever watchful love. Help me to endure with fortitude whatever trial thou shalt see best to send upon me ; looking not at things seen and temporal, but at those things which are unseen and eternal.

Lord, increase my faith. Increase my faith in thee ; in Jesus, thy dear Son ; in the word of thy revealed will ; and amid all the trials of my life, may I be able to say, from the heart, Father, thy will be done !

RESIGNATION.

Oh Lord, my best desires fulfil,
And help me to resign
Life, health, and comfort to thy will,
And make thy pleasure mine.

Why should I shrink at thy command,
Whose love forbids my fears ;
Or tremble at thy gracious hand,
That wipes away my tears ?

No ! let me rather freely yield,
What most I prize, to thee,
Who never hast a good withheld,
Nor wilt withhold from me.

Wisdom and mercy guide my way ;
Shall I resist them both ?
Short-sighted creature of a day,
And crushed before the moth !

But ah ! my inward spirit cries,
Still bind me to thy sway ;
Else the next cloud, that veils my skies,
Drives all these thoughts away.

COWPER.

CHAPTER VIII.

PATIENCE.

THIS resignation of yourself into the hands of God will lead you, in the next place, to the patient endurance of your present affliction.

The recollection that the source of your trial is God, and that its design is the promotion of your spiritual well-being, will show you the reasonableness of bearing with patience whatever God in his providence shall see fit to send.

And what is man, that he should murmur against the Most High, and receive with impatience the lot which God sends? Can he fathom the counsels of the Lord; can he find out the Almighty to perfection? Will he say by his fretful impatience, "I am wiser than the Omniscient?" Or will he dare to arraign the decrees of Jehovah? What impiety is impatience!

And then, how little is to be gained, or I should rather say, how much is lost, by the indulgence of an impatient spirit. The design of this trial is to afford you a new means of spiritual improvement; by your impatience, you subvert this gracious design, and make your sickness a fresh occasion of sin.

Nor will impatience at all alleviate your pain, or smooth for you the roughness of your path. On the contrary, it will but add to the evils that oppress and disturb your spirit, by taking away from you that which might, indeed, help you to bear your trial with fortitude, the consciousness that the sickness of your body was promoting the health of your soul.

And again, how wrong is it for you to indulge an impatient spirit, when you consider how many circumstances there are, even in the midst of your trials, which call for your grateful acknowledgment of the divine goodness! Look round upon all the comforts by which you are surrounded; think of all the kind sympathies

of those friends who are so anxiously watching over you; above all, think of the presence and love of that everlasting Friend who is ever near to hear your prayers, and who will impose upon you no burden too heavy for you to bear; and you will be sensible what ingratitude is impatience.

PRAYER.

HEAVENLY Parent, from whom, and by whom, and through whom are all things, listen to my prayer, and give ear to the voice of my supplication. I would remember thee upon my bed, and meditate upon thee in the night watches. Have mercy upon me, for I am weak. Have compassion, O Lord, for I am sore afflicted. Let me not faint under thy chastisement, nor murmur against thy rebuke. I pray that I may receive with patience all the dispensations of thy hand, however afflictive they may be.

I thank thee, Father, for all the mercies that thou art so kindly mingling with these trials. Let them admonish me of thy goodness, and keep me from murmuring and discontent. Forgive my sins, oh God, and receive me at the last through Jesus Christ.

PATIENCE.

THOUGH the heart, that sorrow chideth,
Sink in anguish and in care;
Yet if patience still abideth,
Hope shall paint her rainbow there.

Hope's bright lamp her light shall borrow
From religion's blessed ray,
And from many a coming morrow
Charm the clouds of grief away.

Wherefore should we sigh and languish,
Since our cares so soon shall cease?
And the heart, that sows in anguish,
Shall hereafter reap in peace.

This is not a scene of pleasure,
These are not the shores of bliss;
We shall gain a brighter treasure,
Find a dearer land than this.

ANONYMOUS.

CHAPTER IX.

SELFISHNESS.

ONE of the peculiar dangers incident to sickness is its tendency to produce a spirit of thorough and inconsiderate selfishness. Nor will it appear at all surprising that this should be the case, when we consider the position in which sickness places us, and the many indulgences which it brings with it.

The sick find themselves the objects of interest and attention to all around them. They find how readily their sympathizing friends will forego their own comfort, and sacrifice their own convenience, if, by so doing, they can in any degree alleviate the pain, or lighten the burden of the sufferer. It is, too, the natural effect of any severe trial to lead us to think less of the smaller troubles of life, as experienced either by ourselves or others. When tossing upon the bed of pain, we

are too apt to overlook the fact, that those very persons, who are endeavoring to afford us relief, may be suffering, though perhaps in a less degree, as well as ourselves. We are in danger of forgetting that they may be wearied with their anxiety and watchful care. Because we would so gladly exchange conditions with them, we may imagine, that, however careful they may be to consult our ease and well-being, yet we are under no obligation to consult their comfort, or to avoid, as far as possible, those things which may render their services more laborious, and their privations for our sake greater. And thus is it that we are led to that spirit of selfishness, which causes us to overlook the claims and convenience of others, in an overweening anxiety to insure our own comfort.

This tendency we ought carefully to guard against; for we are never exempted from the duty of consulting the welfare of others, and of loving our neighbor as ourselves.

Watch, then, for the easily besetting sin of selfishness. Do not suffer your thoughts to be so much engrossed with your own pains and trials, as to lead you to overlook the comfort of those around you. Though you may not be able to do much which shall add to their happiness, still you often have it in your power to show your interest in their welfare, and your remembrance of their claims upon your kind regards.

PRAYER.

SOURCE of all good influences, unto thee would I look for succor, in every hour of temptation. Be ever with me, and let thy spirit aid my infirmities.

In this time of my weakness and dependence upon the care and kind sympathy of my fellow-creatures, preserve me especially from the sin of selfishness. Let me not become regardless of the interests, or unmindful of the claims of those with whom thou hast connected me in life ; but, as thou shalt give me opportunity, let me seek to bear their burdens and promote their happiness. May I never forget the injunction of thy dear Son, to do unto others, as I would have them do unto me.

But, above all, oh God, let me not become so much engrossed with myself as to forget thee, the constant Benefactor even of the humblest of thy children. May it ever be my highest joy to serve

thee with a perfect heart and a willing mind ; doing all thy will with faithfulness ; bearing all thy will with Christian fortitude and resignation of spirit.

AID AGAINST TEMPTATION.

My God, my strength, my hope,
 On thee I cast my care ;
 With humble confidence look up,
 And know thou hearest prayer.
 Give me on thee to wait,
 Till I can all things do,
 On thee, almighty to create,
 Almighty to renew.

I want a sober mind,
 A self-renouncing will,
 That tramples down and casts behind
 The baits of pleasing ill ;
 A soul inured to pain,
 To hardship, grief, and loss,
 Bold to take up, firm to sustain,
 The consecrated cross. .

I want a godly fear,
 A quick discerning eye ;
 That looks to thee when sin is near,
 And sees the tempter fly ;
 A spirit still prepared,
 And armed with jealous care,
 Forever standing on its guard,
 And watching unto prayer.

CHAPTER X.

DUTIES TO ATTENDANTS.

PERHAPS you are ready to inquire in what specific way you may show your regard for those around you.

In the first place, endeavor to lighten their anxiety respecting you, by your own prudence in relation to yourself. Remember that it is a sad discouragement to those who have spent hours and days of painful and anxious watching over you, that your health might be restored, if they find that by your careless imprudence you are willing to aggravate your disorder, and thus render of no avail all their exertion for your welfare. You may imagine that it is entirely your own concern, whether you exercise this prudent care, or not. You feel that the risk of increasing your pain, and of rendering your disease more difficult to subdue, will be particularly your own. It is true that you may be the greatest,

but you are not therefore the only sufferer. You will add also to the toil and increase the anxiety of those friends to whom you are already so largely indebted. You will virtually demand of them additional sacrifices, and bring a fresh burden upon their sympathizing hearts, by thus diminishing the chances of your restoration to health.

In the next place, be careful that you do not exact from those around you more than a proper regard to their own health, and to the claims of other duties, will permit them to bestow. Nothing is more common than for the sick to have their particular favorites among their attendants. There are those whose gentleness, activity, and familiarity with the treatment of the sick, will render their offices peculiarly acceptable to the sufferer. But remember that attendance upon the sick is a wearing and exhausting service, even to the most capable and kind. The close atmosphere of the sick chamber, the disturbance of their customary rest, and the many inconveniences to which those who

have the care of the sick must necessarily be subjected, demand that you should consider those who are for your sake thus exposed. Do not allow yourself to be exorbitant in your demands upon their time and services. Let them see, that, however you may give the preference to their services, you are still willing to be less acceptably served, rather than to require too much of them.

PRAYER.

FATHER in heaven, who in the midst of thy judgments rememberest mercy, gratefully would I thank thee for thy goodness in raising up those friends who are so kindly seeking my welfare, and devoting themselves to my service.

Suffer me not to show myself ungrateful to them, or to thee who hast put it into their hearts to render these tokens of kindness and sympathy, by needlessly increasing their labors and adding to their anxieties, or by being regardless of their health and happiness and duties.

And now, oh Father, I would devoutly commit to thy holy keeping myself, my friends, and all that I hold most dear on the earth ; and in the name of that blessed Savior who loved us, and gave himself for us, that he might heal our moral diseases, and bring us to thyself, I would ascribe to thee all glory and praise forever.

CHRISTIAN FRIENDSHIP.

How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
 When those that love the Lord
 In one another's peace delight,
 And thus fulfil his word ; —

When each can feel his brother sigh,
 And with him bear a part ;
 When sorrow flows from eye to eye,
 And joy from heart to heart ; —

When free from envy, scorn, and pride,
 Our wishes all above,
 Each can a brother's failings hide,
 And show a brother's love ; —

When love, in one delightful stream,
 Through every bosom flows ;
 And union sweet with dear esteem
 In every action glows.

Love is the golden chain that binds
 The happy souls above,
 And he's an heir of heaven that finds
 His bosom glow with love.

SWAIN.

CHAPTER XI.

KINDNESS TO ATTENDANTS.

Do not allow yourself to find fault unnecessarily with those around you.

Sickness will very often cause an irritability and fretfulness of temper, exceedingly annoying to those who are exposed to its influence. And in sickness or in health, it is a very easy matter for any one, so disposed, to find, or to make, occasions for the indulgence of this irritability.

Put the case to yourself; imagine yourself in the situation of those who are so kindly watching around your sick bed; and say, whether it would increase the alacrity of your services in behalf of the sick, were you to find those services received only with dissatisfied complainings; or say, if you should esteem such a reception of your kind intentions a grateful return for your exertions.

Strive, then, against such a spirit in yourself. Endeavor to endure with composure the little vexations that will often present themselves, and be more ready with a kind and gentle admonition, than with a fretful rebuke.

Cultivate the disposition to be satisfied and pleased with what is done for you. Receive with kindness every wellmeant exertion for your comfort, however awkwardly it may be bestowed. Let not the humblest of your attendants go from you with the impression, that you are regardless of their feelings, or ungrateful for their kindness.

Avoid giving your attendants unnecessary trouble. Do not suppose that, in consideration of your infirmity, you are at liberty to indulge yourself in every idle whim, no matter at whose or at what cost, or think it a thing of no consequence how much you may increase the cares and labors of your friends. You may rest assured that in the use of the means needful to your recovery, and in the faithful

discharge of their unavoidable duties, they will find enough occupation, enough that is disagreeable, enough that is fatiguing.

Need I remind you how grateful to their feelings will be this kind consideration on your part? Need I say how much it will add to their interest for you, and their affectionate concern for your welfare, to find that even in the midst of your own trials you have still a regard to the comfort of those around you? It will take from their fatigue its heaviest burden, and render their offices of duty the easy and delightful offices of love.

PRAYER.

TRULY, oh God, thou art not dealing with me after my sins, nor rewarding me according to mine iniquities. Thou dost rebuke, but it is in love. Thou dost chaste, but it is in mercy. By thy rebukes thou dost admonish; by thy chastisements thou dost correct; and in whatever circumstances thou dost place thy children, thou givest them the means of growing in grace, and of cherishing the spirit of Jesus Christ. Thou makest their darkness light; and out of seeming evil thou bringest good.

May I now learn the lesson of love to my fellow-men. Hear my prayer for thy blessing upon those dear friends who are so kindly aiding me to bear the burden of my present infirmities. In their imitation of him who went about doing good, may thy favor attend them. Reward them for all their labors of love; and grant that

I may ever exercise toward them that spirit of grateful kindness, which may make light their labor, and send joy to their hearts.

PRAISE FOR GOD'S MERCIES.

THOUGH sleepless nights and weary days
 Awhile my portion be,
 Teach me, O Lord, in prayer and praise
 To lift my heart to thee ; —

In prayer — for faith and patience still ;
 For hopes that soar above ;
 For meek submission to thy will ;
 Conviction of thy love ; —

In praise — for mercies left me yet,
 With grateful thoughts to share ; —
 O ! teach my heart to feel the debt
 My tongue cannot declare !

My heart, my tongue ! — Lord, what am I,
 That I the knee should bend,
 Or hope, where angel voices vie,
 My praises should ascend ?

My only hope — a worm of earth !
 For prayer or praise of mine,
 Must be as they derive their birth
 From thy pure grace divine.

BARTON.

CHAPTER XII.

DUTY OF GIVING INSTRUCTION TO OTHERS.

ENDEAVOR to make your sick chamber a place of valuable instruction to all who may enter it. Consider how important and valuable opportunities are now afforded you for advancing the spiritual interests of your fellow-men. I know of no teaching more powerful than that which often comes from the bed of sickness. I know of no place, where more striking lessons may be given of the true value of religious faith, or where deeper impressions may be made of the reality of things unseen and eternal.

If they, whom affection and sympathy gather around you, find that there is a power sustaining you beneath the pressure of disease; if they find you exercising a spirit of unrepining submission to God's will; if they see you gratefully remembering the mercies that are mingled in your

cup of affliction ; if they find that you are turning to God as a present help in time of trouble ; if they see that Christian faith faileth not to cheer the spirit under the trial that is laid upon it ; — then do they believe that there must be something more than a name in a religion which produces so blessed effects. They become sensible that there is a solemn reality in truths that are supported by such testimony ; and they go away either rebuked that they have thought so little of a subject so important, or confirmed in their impressions of the worth of that religion which they have already adopted as the rule of their lives. Thus may you pay back to them a thousand fold the obligation which they are imposing upon you ; so that, while they are laboring to restore to soundness your perishing body, you may be striving to save their immortal souls. •

Whether, then, you are experiencing the sustaining power of religion, or lamenting the want of such experience, keep not

back your open and explicit testimony to its value.

Finally, my friend, let your own sufferings open your heart to the woes of others, who may be suffering like yourself the pressure of disease. Are there none within the sphere of your acquaintance who may be suffering, without the comforts and alleviations in their sickness which have been so kindly granted to you? Be not unmindful of their wants. May you not send them some token of your sympathy? Can you not impart something from the abundance with which God has entrusted you, that you may make more tolerable the condition in which they are placed?

PRAYER.

On Thou, who dost appoint to man all his trials and all his duties, and who dost require of us at all times to remember thee, that we may do thy will, and advance the glory of thy kingdom; give now unto thy servant a spirit of true faith and a sincere desire to promote thy cause in the hearts of my fellow-men.

While, in thy great mercy, thou art permitting me to know and to feel the great value of Christian faith, enable me so to cause the light of my good example to shine before my fellow-men that they may be led to seek the one thing needful for them, and to become the willing and obedient disciples of thy Son.

Help me, oh God, to walk in all respects worthy of my high vocation. May thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

**IMITATION OF CHRIST IN TIME OF
SUFFERING.**

How shall I follow him I serve ?
How shall I copy him I love ?
Nor from those blessed footsteps swerve
Which lead me to his seat above ?

Privations, sorrows, bitter scorn,
The toil of life, the mean abode,
The faithless kiss, the crown of thorn —
Are these the consecrated road ?

Oh ! should my path through suffering lie,
Forbid that I should e'er repine ;
Still let me turn to Calvary,
Nor heed my griefs, remembering thine.

CHAPTER XIII.

TREATMENT OF THE PHYSICIAN.

LET me now say a word respecting your duties to your professional advisers and friends.

In your physician you have doubtless sought one in whose skill you can place confidence, and to whose kind interest in your welfare you may safely trust. Your relations to him are peculiarly delicate, your duties to him peculiarly important.

You look to your physician for fidelity, for prudence, for the skilful application of the remedies which are appropriate to your case. If he is a conscientious man, he will feel deeply the responsibility of his situation. You have virtually placed yourself at his disposal. You may not know the nature of the remedies that he is using, nor understand the reasons of the course which he is pursuing. Is it right for you, then, to oppose your igno-

rance to his knowledge? Is it right for you to baffle his skill, by your foolish deceptions, or by your neglect to follow his advice? Is it right to add to his responsibility, by your waywardness or carelessness? He is to a certain degree confiding to you his reputation. This you have no right to tamper with, however you may believe that you have a right to tamper with your own life.

Having chosen for your medical adviser one in whom you can place confidence, treat him with openness and candor. Suffer no false modesty, no fear of temporary pain and inconvenience, to cause you to conceal from him either the causes or the circumstances of your disorder. If, for any reason, you may desire the advice of another physician, say so, frankly; and give your reasons honestly and explicitly; but never be guilty of openly asking advice from one, while you are secretly following the counsels and taking the medicine of another.

Bear in mind, too, that the best suggestions, even of the most skilful in the healing art, will not always avail to restore health to the diseased. It is the appointment of God that sickness should open the gates for the soul to pass from its tabernacle of clay. Do not blame the physician, because his art will not always triumph, nor say that he is without skill, because he cannot always avert the stroke of death.

PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY God, who givest life and breath to all things ; thou hast created and thou dost sustain thy children, and in thy good providence will I ever place my trust.

Bless now, I pray thee, the means which are using for my restoration to health. From thee does the physician derive his skill ; from thee cometh the efficacy of the healing draught. With gratitude to thee, oh God, for raising up to me such a friend, I would receive all the kind attentions of him who is striving to restore to health and strength this weak and wasted frame. Enable me rightly to understand my duties to him, and to be faithful in the discharge of them.

But suffer me not, oh Lord, to put my trust in the arm of flesh. Upon thee, who art omnipotent to save, I would lean for support. If it please thee, let my disorder be rebuked and the stroke of death

averted. Spare me, that I may recover strength before I go hence and am seen no more; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.

GOD AN EVER PRESENT HELP IN TROUBLE.

When, in the hour of lonely woe,
 I give my sorrows leave to flow,
 And anxious fear and dark distrust
 Weigh down my spirit to the dust ;

When not e'en friendship's gentle aid
 Can heal the pain disease has made ;
 Oh ! this shall check each rising sigh,
 That thou, my Father, still art nigh.

Thy counsels and upholding care
 My safety and my comfort are ;
 For thou wilt guide me all my days,
 Till glory crown the work of grace.

My flesh is hastening to decay ;
 Soon shall the world have passed away ;
 And what can mortal friends avail,
 When heart and strength and life shall fail ?

But, oh ! be thou, my Father, nigh,
 And I will triumph while I die ;
 My strength, my portion is divine,
 And Christ, thy Son, is ever mine.

CONDEN, ALTERED.

CHAPTER XIV.

DUTIES TO YOUR MINISTER.

As it respects your conduct toward your minister, I would ask for him the same confidence and candor in relation to your spiritual wants and diseases, as I have asked for your physician in relation to your physical infirmities.

Should he delay visiting you, either not knowing of your illness or of the necessities of your case, do not hesitate to let him know that his visits would be acceptable, nor think it is well to defer seeing him till you have given up all hopes of recovery. He does not come to you as the messenger of death, but as the messenger of God.

If he is worthy of the office which he sustains, your minister will come to you with a sincere and anxious desire to promote your spiritual welfare. That he may do this, you must converse with him

freely upon the great subject of your spiritual interests. Let him know all your doubts and difficulties, your hopes and fears. Be honest and sincere in your intercourse with him. Do not profess more than you feel; but do not, in a spirit of false humility, repress your true sentiments. When he endeavors to lead your thoughts into a train of serious reflection, do not render his exertion fruitless, by your coldness and reserve, or by your thoughtless frivolity.

If your clergyman is a young man, inexperienced in the duties of his profession, make all due allowances for him; encourage him by your kindness; pardon his mistakes; overlook his deficiencies.

Do not attribute to any want of interest, either in yourself or in the duties of his office, defects which arise from a diffidence which time will cure, or to a want of tact which experience only can give.

Bear with him when he declares to you the whole counsel of God. Let him not fear to speak to you the language of faith-

ful admonition and warning. Expect not that he will cry, Peace, peace, when there is no peace. Demand not that he should administer opiates to your conscience, when he ought rather to awaken you to a sense of the danger of spiritual carelessness and unrepented sin. In a word, consider how important to you are the interests which he is laboring to advance. Strive to be faithful in your duties to your own soul, and you will not be wanting in your duty to your spiritual guide.

PRAYER.

MERCIFUL God, who art the source of all spiritual blessing, devoutly would I thank thee, that thou hast given me a friend who may expound thy truth and make known to me the counsels and consolations of thy holy word.

Grant thy blessing upon his exertions to build up the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Enlighten his mind, that he may be led into the knowledge of thy truth. Give him a spirit of faithfulness, of love for immortal souls. Enable me, oh Father, to receive in a right frame of mind all his words of instruction and warning and reproof. May his prayers ever go up with acceptance to thy throne. And do thou so quicken his heart and mine with the influences of thy holy spirit, that our intercourse may be profitable in advancing the great interests of truth and righteousness, and in preparing my soul for the solemn retributions of the eternal world.

MAN NEVER FORSAKEN BY GOD.

**Oh ! deem not, in thy gloomiest hour,
That God abandons thee to woe ;
Wilt thou mistrust his awful power,
Or wilt thou doubt his goodness ? No !
Yet a few hours, and time shall prove
His changeless, countless, matchless love.**

**His rule is wondrous — at his will
This mighty universe, with all
Its beings, vibrates or is still ;
And kingdoms rise, and kingdoms fall.
He lifts the lowly, sinks the high,
In his uncounselled majesty.**

**Oh ! then, be calm, and tread serene,
With prayer and praise, life's varying road ;
'T is gay with flowers, its paths are green,
And thou art guided by thy God.
Be calm — for thine eternal rest
Is near — and heaven will make thee blest.**

CHAPTER XV.

TO THE CONVALESCENT.

I HAVE now, my friend, endeavored to lead your mind to a right view of the circumstances in which it has pleased God to place you, and to show you in what way your days of sickness may be made a blessing to yourself and others.

Do you find the violence of your disorder abating? Do you look forward in confident expectation of the hour when you shall again enter the busy scenes of life, and take up the burden of its cares?

When first you leave the confinement of your sick room, and breathe the pure air, and look upon all God's happy creation, your heart will swell with gratitude toward your heavenly Father, and you will think that you can never cease to bless him for his care and love. You may feel, as you have never felt before, the duty of devoting yourself more heartily to the service of God.

Let not these thoughts pass away and be forgotten. Have you formed good resolutions ? Hasten, then, to put them in practice. Beware of delay, it will prove a snare to your soul. Often look back upon the days of your sickness. Endeavor to recall the sober thoughts of that trying period. Let not its wholesome influences pass away. Set yourself faithfully and seriously at work to reform whatever you then felt to be amiss in your temper and conduct. Are you already a professed disciple of Jesus Christ ? Strive to show yourself more than ever devoted to his cause, and zealous in building up his kingdom. Have you made no explicit avowal of your Christian faith by connecting yourself with a Christian church ? Examine anew the reasons that have kept you from this duty, and see if they are such as God and your own conscience will approve.

Above all, bear in remembrance, that, although you may now be brought back to health and soundness, yet you cannot

wholly escape the stroke of death. It will come sooner or later to you, as it has to the countless generations that have gone before you. Let this admonition of your frailty so teach you the measure of your days, as to lead you to apply your heart to true wisdom. Let the life, which God has so mercifully spared, be employed in the prosecution of those objects for which life was given, and whose remembrance will give peace at the last.

PRAYER.

PRAISE be unto thee, oh Lord, who redeemest our lives from destruction! praise be unto thee for thy great goodness and mercy!

I was brought low with sickness, but thou art restoring me to health. Thou hast heard my prayer and rescued me from the gates of the grave. And now, righteous Father, be pleased to accept the dedication to thy service of the life which thou hast so mercifully spared. Let thy servant walk before thee in obedience of heart and purity of life. Suffer not the cares and anxieties, the sorrows and pleasures of that world upon whose scenes I am about again to enter, to engross my heart, and wean me from my Savior and thee. Enable me to use the world without abusing it. What in me is weak wilt thou strengthen; what is wrong wilt thou correct; what is low wilt thou raise and support. Grant me

the forgiveness of my past sins, cleanse me from secret faults, and receive me at last, through thine infinite mercy in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

RECOVERY FROM SICKNESS.

THESE eyes, that were half closed in death,
Now dare the noontide blaze ;
My voice, that scarce could speak my wants,
Now hymns Jehovah's praise.

How pleasant to my feet unused
To tread the daisied ground !
How sweet to my unwonted ear
The streamlet's lulling sound !

How soft the first breath of the breeze
That on my temples played !
How sweet the woodland evening song
Full floating down the glade !

Oh Lord, my God, all these delights
I to thy mercy owe ;
For thou hast raised me from the couch
Of sickness, pain, and woe.

'T was thou, that from the whelming wave
My sinking soul redeemed ;
'T was thou, that o'er destruction's storm
A calming radiance beamed.

CHAPTER XVI.

TO THOSE WHO HAVE NO EXPECTATION OF
RECOVERY.

HAVE you given up all hope of recovery ? Do you feel that the hour of your departure is fast drawing near ? Set your house in order, and consider carefully what remains for you to do ere you go hence.

Have you property to dispose of ? Make such arrangements concerning it, that no one shall have a right to complain of your injustice in the distribution of it. Prevent, if possible, all occasion for strife or litigation respecting your estate ; and let the claims of the unfortunate upon your benevolence be regarded, as far as God has given you the means of affording them relief.

Are you at peace with your fellow-men ? Oh, go not into the presence of God with enmity in your heart against God's chil-

dren. If you are sensible that you have done wrong, make all the reparation in your power. Have you suffered wrong at the hand of any man? Forgive your brother's trespasses, as you hope yourself to be forgiven.

There are those around you that will mourn that you are taken from them. Let them be consoled by the memory of the resignation and peace with which you bowed to the will of God, and gave your spirit into his holy hand.

Do not hesitate to speak to them freely of your hopes and views, as the scenes of the eternal world open upon your sight; and let your last words to them be the language of affectionate entreaty and of faithful warning.

Study to look upon death in the light of Christian faith, and let not an unholy fear gain possession of your spirit. Think of the immortality which has been brought to light through the gospel, and let the promise of the life to come reconcile you to leaving the life which now is. I would

hope that not only this present sickness, but your whole life has witnessed your preparation for another world. Let me hope that you are now able to say, in the sublime language of the Apostle, "Oh death, where is thy sting? Oh grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be unto God, who has given me the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

PRAYER.

THOU, oh God, art my refuge and my strength, a present help in time of trouble. Man dieth and wasteth away, but thou art forever the same.

Draw near unto me, oh my God, and let thy rod and thy staff comfort and support me. Thou art calling me away from the scenes of earth, thou art bringing me down to the tomb. Let my soul be stayed on thee, for in thee do I put my trust. Hide not thy face from me, but grant me rich experience of thy grace in this hour of my need. I would now look unto Jesus, who died that I might have life. May his example guide me to the last, and his precepts and promises cheer and console my fainting spirit. I commend to thy fatherly care and protection all my dear relatives and friends; guard and guide them through life, and bestow upon them the choicest of thy blessings.

And now, oh Father, into thy hands I would resign my spirit. Forgive the sins and follies of my life, and receive me to thyself in peace. I ask it in the name of my only advocate and mediator, Jesus Christ.

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

How flesh and nature dread to die !
What timorous thoughts our minds enslave !
But grace can raise our hopes on high,
And calm the terrors of the grave.

What ! shall we run to gain the crown,
Yet grieve to think the goal so near ?
Afraid to have our labors done,
And finished this important war ?

Do we not dwell in clouds below,
And little know the God we love ?
Why should we love this twilight so,
When 't is all noon in worlds above ?

There shall we see him, face to face ;
There shall we know the Great Unknown ;
And Jesus, with his glorious grace,
Shine in full light amidst the throne.

Oh ! for a visit from my God,
To drive my fears of death away,
And help me through the darksome road,
To realms of everlasting day !

WATTS.

POETICAL EXTRACTS.

POETICAL EXTRACTS.

THE DIVINE FAITHFULNESS.

Oh ! say, hast thou watched the maternal care
So smiling on infancy ?
Hast thou ever beheld the joy-born tear,
So bright in a mother's eye ?
Hast thou marked the babe on her bosom mild,
Slumbering so tranquilly yet ?
Oh ! she may forget her loveliest child,
But God can never forget.

In infinite love, our Father has weighed
Our share of evil and good ;
And blended our portion of light and shade
In a wise vicissitude ;
Our sunshine he tempers with sober gloom,
Lest light should dazzle our sense ;
And gives, in mercy, a voice to the tomb,
To summon our thoughts from hence.

With thee are my times, in whom I confide,
Secure in thy gracious hand ;
And oh ! to my spirit be sanctified
Whate'er thy wisdom has planned !
In tempests and gloom the sun may descend,
The shades of death may appear —
My Father is there, my Guardian and Friend;
Then why should my spirit fear ?

BOWRING.

**"ACQUAINT NOW THYSELF WITH HIM AND
BE AT PEACE."**

ACQUAINT thee, O mortal ! acquaint thee with
God ,
And joy, like the sunshine, shall beam on thy
road ;
And peace, like the dew-drop, shall fall on thy
head ;
And sleep, like an angel, shall visit thy bed.

Acquaint thee, O mortal ! acquaint thee with
God ;
And he shall be with thee when fears are abroad ;
Thy safeguard, in danger that threatens thy
path,—
Thy joy, in the valley and shadow of death.

Knox.

GOD WISE AND GRACIOUS.

**WAIT, O my soul, thy Maker's will ;
Tumultuous passions, all be still !
Nor let a murmuring thought arise ;
His ways are just, his counsels wise.**

**He in the thickest darkness dwells,
Performs his work, the cause conceals ;
But though his methods are unknown,
Judgment and truth support his throne.**

**Wait, then, my soul, submissive wait,
Prostrate before his awful seat ;
And, 'midst the terrors of his rod,
Trust in a wise and gracious God.**

BEDDOME.

FILIAL SUBMISSION.

AND can my heart aspire so high,
To say, " My Father, God ! "
Lord, at thy feet I long to lie,
And learn to kiss the rod.

I would submit to all thy will,
For thou art good and wise ;
Let every anxious thought be still,
Nor one faint murmur rise.

Thy love can cheer the darksome gloom,
And bid me wait serene ;
Till hopes and joys immortal bloom,
And brighten all the scene.

My Father ! — oh ! permit my heart
To plead her humble claim ;
And ask the bliss those words impart,
In my Redeemer's name.

MRS. STEELE.

THE HOPE OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

If all our hopes, and all our fears,
Were prisoned in life's narrow bound ;
If, travellers through this vale of tears,
We saw no better world beyond ; —
Oh ! what could check the rising sigh,
When nothing earthly could relieve ?
Oh ! who could venture then to die ?
Oh ! who could then endure to live ?

And such were life, without the ray
From Hope's delightful prospects given ;
'T is this that makes our darkness day ;
'T is this that makes our earth a heaven.
Bright is the golden sun above,
And beautiful the flowers that bloom, —
And all is joy, and all is love,
Reflected from a world to come.

DR. BOWRING.

HE DELIVERETH AND RESCUETH.

GOD of my life, whose gracious power
Through varied deaths my soul has led,
Or turned aside the fatal hour,
Or lifted up my fainting head,—

In all my ways thy hand I own,
Thy ruling providence I see ;
Assist me still my course to run —
Still to repose my trust in thee.

Dangers have oft confessed thy power,
And given me back to thy command ;
Nor could they, Lord, my life devour,
Safe in the hollow of thy hand.

Oft from the margin of the grave
Thy love has lifted up my head ;
And still I found thee near to save ;
Diseases owned thy touch, and fled.

Whither, oh ! whither should I fly,
But to my heavenly Father's breast ?
Secure within his arms to lie,
And safe beneath his wings to rest !

WESLEY'S COL.

FUTURITY WISELY CONCEALED.

Oh ! how wise that God hath hidden
All the future from us here !
Oh ! how kind that 't is forbidden
We should feel to-morrow's care !
If time's page of hurrying fleetness
Were unveiled to readers here,
Joy itself would lose its sweetness,
Sorrow would become despair.

Now, if storm the ocean cover,
Hope declares a calm is near ;
When discordant tones are over,
Softened music meets the ear :
If the shadows of affliction
Round us gather as we go,
Soon some heavenly benediction
Wakens peace from slumbering woe.

BOWRING.

TRUST IN GOD DURING SICKNESS.

WHEN summer suns their radiance fling
 O'er every bright and beauteous thing ;
 When, strong in faith, the evil day
 Of pain and grief seems far away ;
 When sorrow, soon as felt, is gone,
 And smooth the stream of life flows on ;
 When duty, cheerful, chosen, free,
 Brings her own prompt reward to thee ;
 'T is easy then, my soul, to raise
 The grateful song of heavenly praise.

But worn and languid, day and night
 To see the same unchanging sight ;
 To feel the rising morn can bring
 Nor health, nor ease, upon its wing,
 Nor form of beauty can create,
 The languid sense to renovate ;
 To look within and feel the mind
 Full charged with blessings for mankind ;
 Then gazing round this little room,
 To whisper,— This must be thy doom —
 Here must thou struggle, here, alone,
 Repress tired nature's rising moan ;
 Oh ! then, my soul, how hard to raise,
 In such an hour, the song of praise !

To look on all this scene of tears,
Of doubts and wishes, hopes and fears,
As some preluding strain that tries
Our discords and our harmonies ;
To think how many a jarring string
The master hand in tune may bring,
How, "finely touched," the soul of pride
May sink subdued and rectified,
How, taught its inmost self to know,
May bless the hand which gave the blow,
Each root of bitterness removed,
Each plant of heavenly growth improved ; —
Instructed thus, who would not raise
To heaven his song of cheerful praise ?

To feel, declining day by day,
Each harsher murmur die away,
And secret springs of joy arise,
To lighten up the weary eyes ;
A hand invisible to feel,
Wounding, with kind design to heal ;
In every bitter draught to think
Of Him who learned that cup to drink ;
Again, and oft again to look
In rapture on that blessed Book
Whose soothing words proclaim to thee,
That, "as thy day, thy strength shall be ; "

Then, with changed heart and steadfast mind,
High heaven before and earth behind,
Thy path of pain again to tread,
Till earth receives thy weary head ; —
O blessed lot ! who would not raise,
In life or death, the song of praise ?

MISS TAYLOR.

GOD'S PRESENCE.

God is here — how sweet the sound !
All I feel and all I see,
Nature teems above, around,
With the present Deity !

Is there danger ? void of fear,
Though the death-winged arrow fly,
I can answer — God is here,
And I move beneath his eye !

When I pray, he hears my prayer ;
When I weep, he sees my grief ;
Do I wander ? he is there,
Ready to afford relief.

Distance cannot part my soul,
Not the morning in its flight,
Not the widest seas that roll,
Not the mount of greatest height.

No, nor any world, that shines
In the infinitude of space,
Lies without the boundless lines
Of the empire of his grace.

Then I would not spend a care
Where my future lot may lie ;
I am safe, for he is there,
Be it within infinity.

EDMESTON.

**"AS THY DAY IS SO SHALL THY
STRENGTH BE."**

**WHEN adverse winds and waves arise,
And in my heart despondence sighs,
When life her throng of care reveals,
And weakness o'er my spirit steals,
Grateful I hear the kind decree,
That as my day my strength shall be.**

**When with sad footsteps memory roves
Mid smitten joys and buried loves,
When sleep my tearful pillow flies,
And dewy morning drinks my sighs,
Still to thy promise, Lord, I flee,
That as my day my strength shall be.**

ANONYMOUS.

HOPE.

THERE is a thought, can lift the soul
 Above the narrow sphere that bounds it,—
 A star, that sheds its mild control
 Brightest when grief's dark cloud surrounds it,
 And pours a soft pervading ray,
 Life's ills can never chase away.

When earthly joys have left the breast,
 And e'en the last fond hope it cherished
 Of mortal bliss — too like the rest —
 Beneath woe's withering touch has perished,
 With fadeless lustre streams that light —
 A halo on the brow of night.

And bitter were our sojourn here,
 In this dark wilderness of sorrow,
 Did not that rainbow beam appear,
 The herald of a brighter morrow,—
 A friendly beacon from on high,
 To guide us to eternity.

A. A. WATTS.

10*

EVENING.

THERE is a beam upon the hill,
There is a light that lingers still
 On ocean's breast ;
There is a blush of rosy light
Steals o'er the diadem of night,
 Far in the west.

Though setting now the smiling ray,
And falling softly round my way
 Eve's parting glow ;
It tells of days to come, as bright
As that which now has turned its flight
 To skies below.

So when life's changing hour has passed,
And death's cold shades are gathering fast
 Around my head ;
A ray of Heaven will pierce the gloom,
And shed its lustre round my tomb,
 When day is fled.

ROBY.

RELIGION A SOURCE OF CONSOLATION.

Is there no kind, no lenient art,
 To heal the anguish of the heart ?
 To ease the heavy load of care,
 Which nature must, but cannot bear ?

Should reason's dictates be obeyed, —
 Too weak, alas ! her strongest aid ! —
 Oh ! let religion, then, be nigh !
 Her consolations never die.

Her powerful aid supports the soul,
 And nature owns her kind control ;
 While she unfolds the sacred page,
 Our fiercest griefs resign their rage.

Then, gentle patience smiles on pain ;
 The fainting soul revives again ;
 Hope wipes the tear from sorrow's eye,
 And faith points upward to the sky.

The promise guides her ardent flight ;
 And joys, unknown to sense, invite
 Those blissful regions to explore,
 Where pleasure blooms to fade no more.

STEELE.

RESIGNATION.

FATHER, my times are in thy hand ;
My soul submissive lies,
Waiting for thy divine command
To call me to the skies.

The regions of eternal peace
Ere long I hope to see ;
When wilt thou sign my sweet release,
And take me home to thee ?

Why should I be of death afraid ?
If thou art with me there,
Though I walk through the darkest shade,
I will not yield to fear.

Supported by thy sovereign love,
And safe in thine embrace,
My willing soul shall mount above,
To see thy blissful face.

Yet, if thy gracious will ordain
My stay on earth awhile,
Dear Lord, my fainting heart sustain,
And cheer me with thy smile.

If thou my soul with lively faith
And heavenly comfort fill,
In health or sickness, life or death,
I 'll welcome all thy will.

FAWCETT.

"THY WILL BE DONE."

"Thy will be done!" In devious way
The hurrying stream of life may run;
Yet still our grateful hearts shall say,
 "Thy will be done!"

"Thy will be done!" If o'er us shine
A gladdening and a prosperous sun,
This prayer will make it more divine —
 "Thy will be done!"

"Thy will be done!" Though shrouded o'er
Our path with gloom, one comfort, one,
Is ours, — to breathe, while we adore,
 "Thy will be done!"

BOWRING.

GOD OUR REFUGE.

DEAR Father, to thy mercy-seat
 My soul for shelter flies ;
 'T is here I find a safe retreat,
 When storms and tempests rise.

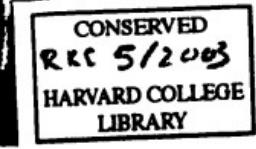
'T is here my faith resolves to dwell ;
 Nor shall I be afraid
 Of all the powers of earth or hell,
 If thou vouchsafe thine aid.

My cheerful hope can never die,
 If thou, my God, art near ;
 Thy grace can raise my comforts high,
 And banish every fear.

My great Protector, and my Lord,
 Thy constant aid impart ;
 Oh ! let thy kind, thy gracious word
 Sustain my trembling heart.

Oh ! never let my soul remove
 From this divine retreat ;
 Still let me trust thy power and love,
 And dwell beneath thy feet.

STEELE.



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